

Date of Hearing: April 24, 2012

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS

Paul J. Cook, Chair

AB 2548 (Mitchell) – As Amended: April 11, 2012

SUBJECT: California Veterans Board

SUMMARY: This bill specifies that a member of the California Veterans Board (Board) must have certain experience in the issues of women veterans. Specifically, this bill requires:

- 1) One member of the board must have substantial training, professional knowledge, or experience in the issues faced by female veterans which may include, but are not limited to, the following issues:
 - a) Combat related disorders;
 - b) Sexual trauma; and
 - c) Homelessness.

EXISTING LAW

- 1) The Board is created by Military and Veterans Code section 64.
- 2) The Board must determine the policies for all operations of the Department of Veterans Affairs (Department).
- 3) The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor subject to the confirmation of the Senate.
- 4) All members of the Board must be veterans as “veteran” is defined in Section 18540.4 of the Government Code.
 - a) One of these members must be retired from the active or reserve forces of the United States military service.
 - b) One of these members must be a resident of a California veterans home.
 - c) One member of the board must have substantial training or professional expertise in mortgage lending and real estate finance.
 - d) One other member of the board must have substantial training or professional expertise in geriatrics, gerontology, or long-term care.
 - e) One member of the board must have an accounting or auditing background, and preferably shall be a certified public accountant.
 - f) One member of the board must have a degree in health care administration or shall have experience in the financial management of health care facilities.

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown at this time.

COMMENTS: As the Board is charged with determining all of the policies for the operations of the Department and the members are not elected, it is not unreasonable to strive for diversity on the Board and to attempt to ensure that common issues which might arise before the Board are dealt with by Board members with some technical expertise in those issues. Women veterans have some experiences in common with male veterans, but also some issues unique to them. It would be of benefit to have a Board member with experience, training, and/or expertise in such issues.

Currently, unless one member satisfies more than one of the listed secondary criteria (e.g., is a veteran who has substantial training or professional expertise in geriatrics, gerontology, etc. and an accounting or auditing background), every Board member must be a veteran *and* every Board member save one *must* meet some specific second criterion. Only one seat is left without a specific secondary requirement attached. Adding this new requirement could result in *every* member needing to meet a specific second criterion. As a policy consideration, this may make it hard to fill Board seats, as every criterion is mandated, not permissive or suggestive.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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